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# The Man From Home

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of the Play of  
the Same Name

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HARRY LEON  
WILSON

(Continued.)  
CHAPTER XIV.  
BLACKMAIL.

PIKE was still standing with the letter in his hand, looking after Ethel, when he awoke to the realization of what her words meant to him. She had given her promise, and she did not mean that anything in the world should make her revoke it. That promise was sacred to her, just as if it had been spoken before a clergyman.

In his heart Pike knew he would have to give in if he was to make her happy, and yet he knew that in making her temporarily happy he would be making her eternally miserable. If he could have the strength to hold out against her and refuse to sanction the marriage he knew the crew of aristocrats would never accept her without the cash, and that by the terms of John Simpson's will could never be theirs without his consent. Of his own hopes he could see but the faintest glimmering. He had irretrievably offended the girl, and she would hate him all her life for it, he feared. His entrance into her new phase of life had been unfortunate. His continuance in it was little else than an insult, according to her way of thinking. And Jim Cooley, whom he had trusted to find the flaw in the Hawcastle escutcheon that he knew had existed, had failed him miserably.

The lawyer felt that he was a long way from home. He sighed and turned to where the sun was sinking in a haze of red across the bay. Then he heard the voice of Horace and chiming with it the cultured accents of Lord Hawcastle. Apparently they were coming to seek him. She had reiterated his refusal.

Warily he turned again to the automobile and leaned against it. As he did so he heard Horace say:

"But Ethel says Mr. Pike positively refuses."

In return he heard Hawcastle reply:

"Leave him to me. In ten minutes he will be as meek as a lamb."

Dumbly Pike wondered what fresh argument the earl had to offer and mentally steeled himself against it. As he looked up he encountered the steady glare of the earl.

"My dear Pike," began the latter, "there is a certain question—"

"I said I would not discuss that with you. I meant what I said," observed Daniel quietly.

"This is another question," went on the other, heedless of the warning or at least unaffected by it.

"Late this afternoon I developed a great anxiety concerning the penalty prescribed by Italian law for those fortunate and impulsive individuals who connive at the escape or concealment of certain unfortunate who are wanted by the police."

Daniel looked at him, with a smile.

"So you're all worked up about that, are you?" Hawcastle glared at him, but went on.

"So deeply that I ascertained the penalty for it. For the person whose kind heart has so betrayed him the penalty is two years in prison, and Italian prisons, I am credibly informed, are unpleasant."

Pike ruminated and folded his letter.

"Being in jail isn't much like an Elysian carnival," he observed.

"Even a citizen of your admirable country could not escape if he were caught in the act. I will be plain with you."

These last words had an ominous note. "Let us imagine that a badly wanted man appeared upon the piazza here and made an appeal to one of your countrymen who, for the purposes of argument, is at work upon this car. Say that the too amiable American conceals the fugitive under the automobile and afterward, with the connivance of a friend, deceives the officers of the law and shelters the criminal, say, in a room of that lower suit there."

He looked about in the growing twilight and pointed dramatically to the window. Pike, now thoroughly interested and with his pulse beating a rapid tattoo, followed his finger. The earl went on:

"Imagine, for instance, that the shadow which appears upon that curtain were that of the wanted man. Would you not agree then to a reasonable request?"

Daniel swallowed painfully, for he saw in some manner that that swaying window curtain which had caught his eye an hour ago had held a distinct menace. It seemed too bad that this should be the end of it all—the defenses he had raised for the girl of his dead friend should be swept away in an instant by a bit of folly.

"What would be the nature of that request?" he asked.

"It would concern a certain alliance—might concern a certain settlement," the earl replied softly.

"If the request were refused, what would the consequences be?" Pike went on, with lowered eyes, for he would not trust himself to meet those of the nobleman.

"Two years at least in prison for the American."

"Looks bad for—that American, eh?" Pike inquired whimsically.

Lord Hawcastle stepped close to him.

"If this fellow countryman of yours were assured that the law would be permitted to take its course if a favorable answer to a certain question were not received in an hour within that hotel, what, in your opinion, would the answer be?"

Pike looked up from the letter he was twisting in his hands, and his thin shoulders took on a squarer attitude. He looked his antagonist squarely in the eye, but he did not raise the tone of his voice.

"It would depend a good deal on which of my countrymen you caught. If it depended on the one I know best he'd tell you he'd see you in hades first."

For an instant the earl looked fixedly at Daniel, and his face went red and white by turns. There was a dangerous flash in his eyes, and he stepped a trifle closer and half raised his walking stick. Then, with a muttered oath, he dropped it, picked up his hat from the bench where he had thrown it and walked to the hotel steps.

"You have an hour," he said, menacingly turning. "At the end of that time we will know what to do."

Daniel must have stood there ten minutes after Hawcastle had gone, and the twilight came down and enveloped him with its softness. As the lights came out here and there he turned and looked over at the windows of Von Grollenhagen's suit and noted the shadow still on the window blind.

"Looks to me like doc's in this thing and ought to be told," he murmured.

He found his way slowly across the grass and up the steps and in another moment tapped upon the door of the German's rooms. The door was opened by Ribiere, who informed him that Von Grollenhagen was dressing. He found his friend adjusting his white cravat before a mirror.

"Within five minutes he had acquainted the other with all that had passed and had received a smile in return. Von Grollenhagen refused to take the matter seriously.

"Puff!" he said. "Surely you can trust this Lord Hawcastle not to mention it. He must know that the consequences for you as well as for me would be, to say the least, disastrous. Surely you made that clear to him."

Daniel smiled gently.

"No," he answered grimly. "He made it clear to me. Two years in jail, and if I don't make up my mind in fifty minutes from now to do what he wants me to do—"

"What is it that he wants you to do?" asked the German.

"The young lady's father trusted me to look after her, and if I won't promise to let her pay \$150,000 for that, well, you've seen it around here, haven't you?"

"I have observed it, if you refer to the son of Lord Hawcastle," answered Von Grollenhagen gravely.

"Well, if I don't agree to that Ivanoff goes to Siberia and you and I to jail."

Von Grollenhagen looked at him quickly.

"He threatens that! What do you intend to do?"

"I can't agree. There wouldn't be any trouble to it if it was only me. They could land me for two years or twenty. But I can't do what they want, even to let you and Ivanoff out. It ain't my money. All I can do is to hint that you get out right away. Ivanoff can't go. They've got a ring around this place."

"You could get away, too, my friend," said the German, watching him softly. "You had not thought of that?"

"No, sir, and I'm not going to think of it. But you—"

"As for me, I shall go," said Von Grollenhagen, standing up.

"Well, that's part of the load off my mind. I haven't had the nerve to tell that poor fellow in there, though."

Von Grollenhagen motioned to Ribiere.

"Appellez le monsieur la!" he commanded and pointed to the other door of the chamber. The man opened it at once and beckoned to Ivanoff.

"Ivanoff, some unexpected difficulties have arisen," said the German. "The police have discovered your presence here, and persons who wish evil to my friend have threatened to make trouble. He can do nothing further to save you unless he betrays a sacred trust."

"It's the truth, old man," said Daniel feelingly. "I can't do it."

For a moment the Russian refugee staggered and supported himself with his hand on the table. Then he looked up.

"I thank you for what you have tried to do."

Von Grollenhagen went on:

"In the meantime my friend believes Naples a safe place for me. And so auf wiedersehen."

Pike extended his hand, which the German took.

"Goodbye, doc, and God bless you!" he said. And Von Grollenhagen squeezed Pike's fingers.

"To our next meeting," he said and in a moment was gone.

## CHAPTER XV.

"HE'S A RUSSIAN NOBLE!"

THE instant he had disappeared Ivanoff crossed rapidly to the small table near the bedroom and picked up a cigarette from a box that lay there with a bottle.

"I thought so. Russian!" he said, and in answer to Pike's look of inquiry went on. "That man, your friend, who calls himself Von Grollenhagen, is not a German—he is a Russian—not only that—he is a Russian noble. I see it in a hundred ways that you cannot."

"He helped us this afternoon," said Daniel, but Ivanoff did not seem to hear him.

"I have felt it inevitable that I should go back to Siberia ever since I

came here"—began Daniel, but the other interrupted.

"There is no 'perhaps' for me. There has never been a 'perhaps' since I met Helene, my wife—she who sent me to the mines, she and my dear English friend."

For a moment Daniel was thoughtful; then he looked up quickly.

"What was his name?" he asked.

"Glenwood—I shall never forget it," the Russian replied. "He had contracts with the ministry of finance. He supplied hydraulic machinery to the government. The name Glenwood means nothing to you, and there are a million Helenes in France. I prayed God to let me meet them before I was taken, but"—He paused as a knock came upon the door. "It is the carabinieri!" he said hoarsely and shrank back.

"Not yet," answered Pike quietly. "Go back to your room. We won't throw our hands into the discard until we're called, and I guess we'll keep on raising." He waited a moment until Ivanoff had retired and then opened the door. Mariano stood without bowing.

"Mlad! Creech—she ask you would speak with her a few minutes," he said.

"Where is she?" asked Pike.

"Here, sir," replied the man. "Tell her to come right in. Ah, come in, ma'am," he went on as Lady Creech appeared in the doorway. When he had closed the door behind her she said coldly:

"My brother-in-law feels that some one well acquainted with Miss Granger-Simpson's ambitions and her inner nature should put the case finally to you before we proceed to extremities," she said.

"Yes, ma'am," answered Daniel.

"My brother-in-law has made us aware of the state of affairs, and we are all quite in sympathy as to what should be done to you, but in the kindness of our hearts we condone our offense—if you accede to our reasonable demands."

Daniel looked at his watch.

"In twenty minutes?" he asked.

"In twenty minutes," she replied frigidly.

"You say he told all of you. Did he tell Miss Ethel?" Daniel asked.

"It has not been thought proper. Young girls should be shielded from everything disagreeable," she answered pompously, and Daniel grinned.

"Yes, ma'am," he said. "That was the idea that got me into this trouble. You see, I know your interest in her. I've handled all her accounts."

"If you don't mind we'll omit all tradesmanlike references," remarked the old lady acidly. "It has been suggested that you make this opposition



"I guess we'll keep on raising."

because you have a sentimental interest in the young lady yourself. We can comprehend no other grounds."

"Me!" echoed Daniel in surprise.

"You can't comprehend. But you can comprehend I could have no hope, can't you?"

"One never knows," replied Lady Creech loftily. "We had thought to offer her an alliance with a family that for 700 years—"

"Yes, ma'am, I know—Creech and Agnecourt," interjected Pike, but she paid no attention.

"—has never been sullied by the low ideals of trade and barter."

"Wait a minute, Mrs. Creech," said Daniel quickly, tugging at his coat pocket. "I've got a letter right here that tells me your brother-in-law was in business—and I respect him for it—only a few years ago."

"A letter from whom?" demanded the lady angrily, rising.

"Jim Cooley, our vice consul at London. He says Mr. Hawcastle—"

"Mr. Hawcastle!" ejaculated Lady Creech.

(To be Continued.)

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